

**Follow-up Audit
Public Works Department
Street Closure Permit Activities**

April 2000

**City Auditor's Office
City of Kansas City, Missouri**

April 26, 2000

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

This follow-up audit of the Public Works Department's street closure permit activities was initiated by the city auditor pursuant to Article II, Section 13 of the city charter. The follow-up report was initiated as part of the City Auditor's Office policy of determining department progress in improving program operations subsequent to issuance of our audit reports.

We found that the Public Works Department has made significant efforts to improve compliance with city code requirements relating to street closures. A comprehensive program was implemented and is staffed by 3.5 employees under the supervision of a program manager assigned to the program full time. A fee schedule was put in place, with the type and cost of the permit varying with the length of the job and frequency with which the permittee blocks traffic.

We also found, however, that procedures in the new program need to be strengthened. Although work sites are inspected, the inspectors do not schedule the jobs to be inspected and do not document what they observe. In addition, the fees that were implemented are not high enough to serve as an incentive for minimizing the length of the disruption. Finally, we observed some lax cash handling procedures that could expose the city to the risk of loss or theft of cash from the program. We made a number of recommendations directed toward further strengthening the street closure program and improving oversight.

The draft follow-up report was sent to the city manager and director of public works on March 28, 2000. A written response is included in the appendices. We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us during this project by staff in the Public Works Department. The audit team for this project was Chanel Goodwin-Watkins and Michael Eglinski.

Mark Funkhouser
City Auditor

Follow-up Audit: Street Closures Permit Activities

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Objectives	1
Scope and Methodology	1
Background	2
Legislative Authority	2
Summary of the 1994 Audit	3
Findings and Recommendations	5
Summary	5
Public Works Established a Comprehensive Program	5
Traffic Control Permit Program Implemented	6
Permit Requirements Strengthened	6
Inspection and Permit Processes Should Be Strengthened	7
Cross-checking Permits Could Increase Compliance	8
Incentives to Reduce Closures Have Not Been Implemented	9
Public Works Took Steps to Reduce Closures	9
Lane Rental Fees Could Decrease Disruption	10
Cash Handling Should Be Strengthened	12
Permit Payments Are Not Deposited Daily	12
Reconciliations Were Not Being Performed	13
Cash Handling Duties Are Not Segregated	13
Cash Handling Training Needed	13
Recommendations	14
Appendix A: Prior Audit Recommendations	15
Appendix B: Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS) Reports	19
Appendix C: Director of Public Works' Response	35

List of Exhibits

Exhibit 1: Revenue from Permit Fees, 1994-1999	7
Exhibit 2: Public Works' Fee Schedule	10

Introduction

Objectives

This follow-up audit of the Public Works Department's street closure program was conducted pursuant to Article II, Section 13 of the Charter of Kansas City, Missouri, which establishes the Office of the City Auditor and outlines the city auditor's primary duties.

A performance audit is an objective and systematic examination of evidence to independently assess the performance of a government organization, program, activity, or function in order to provide information to improve public accountability and facilitate decision-making by parties with responsibility to oversee or initiate corrective action.¹ A follow-up audit is an examination for the purpose of reporting on the extent to which an agency has dealt with problems identified in a prior audit.

This follow-up audit was designed to answer the following questions:

- Has the Public Works Department taken steps to improve compliance with street closure requirements in the Code of Ordinances?
- Has the Public Works Department taken action to minimize disruption associated with closures?

Scope and Methodology

This follow-up audit was not designed or intended to be another full - scale audit of the street closure program; rather, it was designed to determine the progress made in addressing issues raised in the 1994 performance audit. The follow-up audit was performed in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards, with the exception of the completion of an external quality control review of the office within the last three years.² Our methods included:

¹ Comptroller General of the United States, *Government Auditing Standards* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), p. 14.

² The last review was performed in April 1995. A peer review is planned for the current year.

- Reviewing the December 1994 audit and selected workpapers, and the Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS) reports submitted by management in response to the audit.
- Interviewing staff from the Public Works Department.
- Examining city records, procedures, and documents related to the street closure program.
- Accompanying an inspector in the field.

Background

In order to minimize disruption to the public and ensure the safety of traffic and workers, the city regulates street closures. Portions of the public right-of-way may be temporarily closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic for a variety of reasons, such as excavations, parking construction equipment, parking vehicles in areas where parking is otherwise restricted, or the placement of dumpsters. The Public Works Department is responsible for issuing permits, reviewing work site traffic control plans, and inspecting work sites on which streets are closed.

Legislative Authority

Under the city charter, the director of public works is responsible for the grading and improvement of all streets, alleys, highways, sidewalk spaces and public ways not under control of the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners, and keeping them open and in a safe and clean condition. City code also provides the director of public works the authority to place and maintain official traffic control devices, and to restrict streets, alleys, or areas in the public right-of-way to vehicular or pedestrian traffic.³

The code requires a permit to close any lane or street, or to reroute or detour traffic. Closures lasting more than three days are assessed an engineering inspection fee according to a schedule that increases with the length of time of the closure. The code requires fees to be doubled for work commenced without a permit.

³ Code of Ordinances, Kansas City, Missouri, Section 70-38.

Summary of the 1994 Audit

Our original audit determined that low compliance with street closure permit requirements resulted in the city realizing less revenue than what was provided for by the code, and threatened the safety of travelers and construction workers. We also found a lack of policies or procedures for issuing street closure permits, and that some street closure permit fees were being waived as a result. Lastly, we found that the permit fee structure lacked incentives to encourage those making closures to complete their work quickly so that costs and inconvenience to the public are minimized.

We made a number of recommendations directed toward increasing compliance, strengthening policies and procedures, and ensuring that the fee schedule includes incentives to reduce the negative impact of closures. (See Appendix A.) Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS) reports are included in Appendix B.

Findings and Recommendations

Summary

The Public Works Department has made significant progress in implementing changes designed to improve compliance with street closure code provisions. Three employees were assigned to the street closure program under the supervision of a program manager assigned full time to the program.⁴ At the time of our original audit, no city staff was fully devoted to the program. A fee schedule was established with requirements that vary depending on the length of the job and the frequency with which the permittee will be making closures. An inspection program was implemented, although procedures need to be more systematic.

We also found, however, that incentives, such as lane rental charges, have not been established to reduce disruptions caused by street closures. Finally, our fieldwork identified some weaknesses in cash handling procedures that expose the city to the risk of loss or theft.

Public Works Established a Comprehensive Program

The Public Works Department has taken steps to improve compliance with the traffic control requirements in the code. A comprehensive program has been implemented, under the supervision of a full-time program manager. A fee schedule was put in place, with different types of permits available based on the length of the job and the frequency with which the permittee blocks traffic. Worksites are being inspected, and permittees are expected to show proof that their staff has been trained in workzone safety. We also found, however, that there is still no mechanism in place whereby excavation permit applications are cross-checked to make sure that applicants have obtained permits to block traffic.

⁴ A fourth employee's time is split between the street closure program and other duties.

Traffic Control Permit Program Implemented

The Public Works Department increased the staff devoted to overseeing the street closure program. Under the supervision of a full-time program manager, two employees perform inspections, one employee issues permits, and another employee's time is split between issuing permits and other duties. At the time of our original audit, no city employees were devoted to the program full-time. The assignment of staff to the program has resulted in a greater emphasis on street closure safety and stronger oversight.

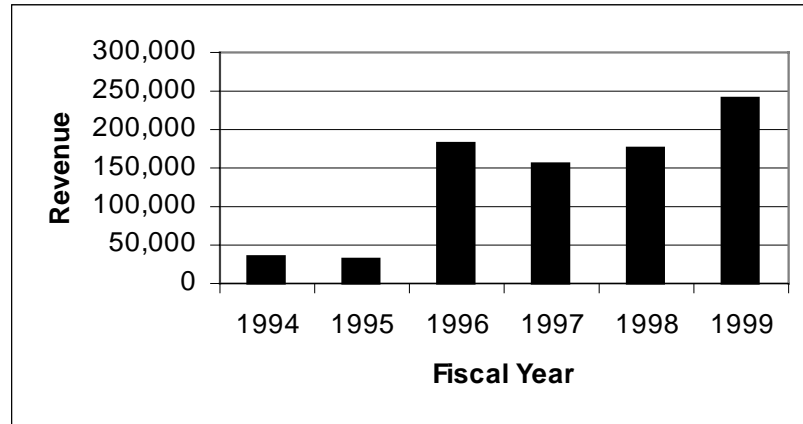
Permit Requirements Strengthened

Permit fees were changed after the 1994 audit. At the time of our original audit, the only requirement was that entities expecting to block traffic had to purchase a permit for \$25 that was good for 30 days. In response to the original audit, the Public Works Department created a task force that made recommendations regarding traffic control regulations. In March 1995, the code was revised to include three types of permits, and in 1997, some of the fees were revised.

- **Annual traffic control permit.** Utilities, other entities that have a franchise agreement with the city, and city departments are eligible to purchase annual traffic control permits. Under the annual permit system, the entity purchases a \$100 annual permit for every vehicle used on each site. These permits are only good for jobs lasting 72 hours or less. For jobs expected to take longer, entities are required to purchase a regular traffic control permit.
- **Traffic control permit.** Entities for which the annual permit is not appropriate must pay \$25 to apply for a traffic control permit. If a project requires full blockage of a roadway, the applicant must submit a traffic control plan for review. If the applicant does not develop its own plan, city staff will do so at a cost of \$50/hour. The entity will be assessed an engineering and inspection fee, which varies with the length of time streets are expected to be closed.
- **Water/sewer main connection/disconnection permit.** Plumbers making excavations in the right-of-way in a residential area for the purpose of connecting or disconnecting a water or sewer line to a city main line are charged \$5 on top of the excavation permit to cover the cost of a traffic control permit.

Revenue increased. As a result of changes in how the city regulates street closures, permit fee revenue has increased. During fiscal year 1994, revenue was almost \$36,000. Revenue increased to more than \$240,000 in 1999. (See Exhibit 1.)

Exhibit 1. Revenue from Permit Fees, 1994-1999



Source: AFN system.

Inspection and Permit Processes Should Be Strengthened

Although the department has made considerable progress in its efforts to improve compliance with the code, more oversight is needed to improve the effectiveness of the changes. Inspections should be systematic and the results of the inspections should be documented. In addition, the program does not enforce its certification requirements. Under the program's procedures, contractors are responsible for obtaining all required permits, preparing plans, and supplying proof that their employees are trained in traffic control safety. For these procedures to be effective, city staff must ensure contractors are in compliance.

Inspections are not systematically scheduled. Two of the positions added to the program since our original audit are inspectors responsible for ensuring that proper traffic control is implemented at work sites and workers have obtained necessary permits. We recommended that Public Works develop an inspection program with fee revenue from the sale of permits. The department implemented the recommendation, but the effectiveness of the inspection program would increase by making inspections more systematic.

Worksites are not systematically scheduled for inspections. Instead, staff learn about projects by attending pre-construction conferences, by receiving notices of projects, and through observation. The inspector schedules his stops by the busiest streets. Downtown streets are a

priority and are checked often. Inspectors also check sites when they receive complaints about them. The lack of a system by which worksites are scheduled for inspection increases the possibility that a worksite could be missed, thus reducing city oversight. The program should develop a systematic process whereby worksites are scheduled for inspection.

Inspections are not formally documented. The program does not have policies and procedures in place to guide and document inspections. Although inspectors orally inform the contractor of safety issues observed, they do not document those observations on a written inspection form. Inspection results are not provided to the contractor in writing and the program does not have a record of the safety violations. In addition, it is difficult to ensure that all safety requirements are included in the inspection. Inspections should be formally documented and the documentation should be maintained in project files.

Certification requirements are not enforced for annual traffic control permits. Public Works staff issue annual permits without requiring permittees to submit proof they have been certified in work zone safety. The rules and regulations for annual traffic control permits require that proof of employees' certification in work zone safety traffic control be submitted annually. According to the regulations, all first-line supervisors must be certified, as well as one certified employee for every 10 vehicle permits. Our review of annual permit files for 1998 and 1999 determined that proof of contractor certification was not always submitted, although the annual permits had been issued.

The lack of certification increases the risk that permittees may be using employees who are not trained in work zone safety, thus posing a risk to the public. Although some of the permittees may be certified, program policy requires proof be submitted annually before permits are issued. Therefore, proof of certification should be submitted before annual traffic control permits are issued.

Cross-checking Permits Could Increase Compliance

The department does not use the KIVA permit system to cross-check excavation and traffic control permits as a method to improve compliance. ARTS reports submitted by the Public Works Department indicated that the engineering staff and traffic control program staff had discussed developing a mechanism by which excavation permit applications and street closure permit applications could be cross-checked. Our original audit had recommended that proof that a street

closure permit has been obtained should be a condition of obtaining an excavation permit. Staff in the engineering division suggested that

KIVA⁵ could be used to cross-check the permits. This mechanism has not been established.

In order to dig up city streets, contractors must obtain excavation permits. In most cases, the excavation will result in blocked traffic lanes. Cross-checking permits would allow staff who issue excavation permits to ensure a permittee had obtained a traffic control permit. In addition, if a work zone plan is required, staff have the opportunity to review the plan and suggest changes that need to be made for safety purposes. The director of public works should establish a mechanism in KIVA whereby applications for excavation permits are cross-checked with street closure permits and not issued unless street closure permits are obtained.

Incentives to Reduce Closures Have Not Been Implemented

Street closures create disruptions and impose costs on the public. In the previous audit, we recommended that a new permit fee structure be implemented to reduce the disruption resulting from closures. While the department implemented fees that increase with the duration of the closure, the fees were set to cover the cost of the program, not to cover the costs imposed on the public. Fees are still too low to create an effective economic incentive for workers to complete work quickly to reduce disruption. Economic incentives should be developed to reduce the disruption associated with closures.

Public Works Took Steps to Reduce Closures

The *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* includes principles and standards which, if followed, would serve to reduce the disruption caused by street closures. The city has incorporated many of these recommendations in the Code of Ordinances. Sections of the code, for example, require that a traffic control plan be developed for street closures or detours, and that those applying for an annual permit be experienced in proper traffic control procedures.

Fees were revised, but lane rentals were not implemented. The code was revised and includes engineering inspection fees that increase with

⁵ KIVA is a land information database used for various permit and inspection activities. KIVA is currently being used in 12 departments.

the length of time a road is closed. (See Exhibit 2.) The revised fee structure does not include lane rental fees which would address other

disruption costs. For example, closing a busy street causes more disruption than closing a less busy street, but a city permit fee does not increase for busy streets. In our original audit, we recommended a fee structure that included economic incentives to reduce the negative impacts of closures.

Exhibit 2. Public Works' Fee Schedule

Length of Job (in days)	Engineering Inspection Fee
4-15	\$20
16-30	\$30
30-60	\$30 + \$1/day beyond 30 days
61-90	\$60 + \$2/day beyond 60 days
91-180	\$120 + \$3/day beyond 120 days
181 +	\$390 + \$5/day beyond 180 days

Source: Code of Ordinances, Kansas City, Missouri, Section 70-39.

Lane Rental Fees Could Decrease Disruption

Occupancy fees, or lane rental fees serve as a means of expediting work on city streets. Lane rentals require the contractor to pay for the cost of the inconvenience travelers bear. These include the cost of delays to traffic on an obstructed route and increased operating and time costs associated with traffic diverted to another route. These also include less tangible costs, such as the risk of injury to traffic or construction workers. Lane rentals encourage contractors to schedule their work to keep traffic restrictions to a minimum in terms of duration and the number of lanes closed.

Lane rentals are based on the cost of delay to the public. "Rental fee rates are dependent on the number and type of lanes closed and can vary for different hours of the day."⁶ For example, the City of St. Paul calculates disruption costs based on average daily traffic, number of calendar days, detour distance in miles, and a cost per mile. The fee is reduced during non-rush hour periods.

The fee provides a financial incentive to minimize disruptions. Permittees pay less for closures that are on streets with less traffic or are for shorter duration. As a result, a permittee can save money by reducing the disruption or the duration of closures.

⁶ Briefing *FHWA Initiatives To Encourage Quality Through Innovative Contracting Practices Special Experimental Projects*, Federal Highway Administration, U. S. Department of Transportation, No. 14, (SEP-14).

St. Paul Recovers Disruption Costs Caused By Street Closures

The City of St. Paul recovers the costs of disruptions caused by street closures. The “disruptive cost” component of excavation and obstruction permits is based on:

- (1) losses to businesses and merchants which would not have occurred but for the obstructions, and
- (2) social costs to the users of the right-of-way resulting from traffic delays, diversions, disruption in services, missed or delayed appointments, and decline in quality of life.

The formula St. Paul uses to calculate the cost of disruption for each day of closure is:

$$(\text{Average daily traffic}) \times (\text{detour distance in miles}) \times (\$0.31).$$

Permittees pay the full fee if the closure affects all of the lanes of traffic, but they pay a reduced fee if all of the lanes are not affected. For example, if there are three lanes of traffic and the closure affects one of them, the fee is 20 percent of the full closure fee.

We used St. Paul’s formula to calculate disruption charges for three closures in Kansas City. A street closure on Main that cost \$60 to obtain would have cost the permittee almost \$13,000 if the city used St. Paul’s method of recovering disruption costs. (See table below.)

Project	Average Daily Traffic	Calendar Days	Lane Disruption Cost	Public Works Fee
2300 Main	9,098	35	\$12,833	\$60
11th Street between Locust and Oak	5,721	2	\$1,419	\$50
All lanes of W. 10th St. between Main and Baltimore	5,552	1	\$224	\$50

Sources: Kansas City, Missouri, Public Works records; and the City of St. Paul, Minnesota.

State road construction projects also utilize lane rentals. Bidders are evaluated on the total cost of the project including the lane rental cost for the time the contractor obstructs the roadway. The rental fee rates are stated in the bidding proposal in dollars per lane per period of time, and are dependent on the numbers and types of lanes closed with higher rates

charged during rush hour. Colorado, Indiana, Maine, Oklahoma, and Oregon have used lane rental fees for highway projects. The rates used in these projects range from \$1,500 to \$2,850 per lane per day or up to \$2,000 per hour⁷.

Although the Public Works Department does not utilize bidding procedures when permittees work in roadways, the lane rental concept still has merit for Kansas City and could be adapted to suit our circumstances. In order to reduce the inconvenience and disruption caused by blocked roadways, we recommend that the the director of public works prepare for City Council consideration an ordinance revising the fee schedule to implement lane rentals.

Cash Handling Should Be Strengthened

Our follow-up audit work determined that cash handling procedures in the division need to be strengthened. Monies are not deposited in the city treasury according to city code, and duties are not segregated. Until recently, cash and checks were not reconciled to permit sales. Lax controls over cash handling pose a risk of loss or theft of city funds.

Permit Payments Are Not Deposited Daily

When payment for a permit is received, the payment is attached to a receipt and delivered to the accounting staff at the end of the day. Staff in the accounting division report they do not deposit the monies daily, but instead make deposits once every few weeks. In a one-week period, the street closure program received over \$4,000 in permit payments.

Section 2-200 of the Code of Ordinances requires all money to be paid into the city treasury the following day after it has been received. Amounts less than \$100 a week can be deposited once a week or whenever \$100 is accumulated. Not making daily deposits could result in the theft or loss of city funds. Money received from the sale of permits should be deposited daily in the city treasury.

⁷ Briefing *FHWA Initiatives To Encourage Quality Through Innovative Contracting Practices Special Experimental Projects*, No. 14 (SEP-14).

Reconciliations Were Not Being Performed

Until recently, no one was reconciling cash received to permit sales. Without balancing permit payments to permit sales, cash received could be stolen and not detected.

The sale of permits should be recorded and balanced to the sales revenue. Management should establish procedures whereby receipts are verified against permit sales independent of the personnel who accept the payments.

Cash Handling Duties Are Not Segregated

The same person that receives payment for a permit also issues the permit. The risk of theft increases when duties are not segregated. The same person that issues the permit should not receive the payment. Management should take steps to segregate cash handling duties.

Cash Handling Training Needed

The program manager has submitted a request to the Finance Department for staff to attend a cash handling class. The class was to be held in January of 2000, but the class has not been offered. As a result, the new staff working in the street closure program have not attended the city's class on cash handling. All staff that work in the program should attend a cash handling class.

Recommendations

1. The director of public works should strengthen the inspection component of the street closure program by implementing a system for scheduling inspections, and developing procedures to formally document inspections.
2. The director of public works should implement procedures whereby all required certifications must be submitted before annual traffic control permits are issued.
3. The director of public works should establish a mechanism in KIVA by which excavation permits are cross-checked with street closure permits and not issued unless street closure permits are obtained.
4. The director of public works should prepare for City Council consideration an ordinance that implements the use of lane rental fees.
5. The director of public works should strengthen cash handling procedures; require city monies to be deposited in compliance with the city code; and require receipts to be reconciled to payment information. Staff should also be trained in proper cash handling techniques.

Appendix A

Prior Audit Recommendations

Prior Audit Recommendations

1. The Director of Public Works should develop procedures designed to increase compliance with the street closure permit requirements.
2. The Director of Public Works should implement a requirement that proof that a street closure permit has been obtained be a condition of obtaining an excavation permit.
3. The Director of Public Works should implement procedures designed to ensure that utilities that issue excavation permits to themselves comply with street closure permit requirements.
4. The Director of Public Works should require the Water and Pollution Control and other City departments to acquire and pay for street closure permits when closing streets or lanes.
5. The Director of Public Works should develop a systematic street closure inspection system, paid for from revenues resulting from increased compliance.
6. The city manager should develop for City Council consideration a revised street closure permit fee structure that would include economic incentives to reduce the negative impacts of closures.
7. The Director of Public Works should develop written policies and procedures addressing the issuance of closure permits. At a minimum, these policies and procedures should include:
 - (a) conditions under which permit fees will be waived,
 - (b) conditions under which a permit will be issued to allow parking when parking is normally restricted,
 - (c) restrictions that will be placed on closures.
8. The Director of Public Works should discontinue the practice of allowing applicants for closure permits to be billed for the service fee. Applicants should be required to pay at the time the permit application is made.
9. The Director of Public Works should revise the closure permit database to include information on the location of closures in a consistent format. The Director should consult the City's Address Standards Committee to ensure that the format for location information is compatible with the City's geographic information system.

Appendix B

Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS) Reports

Audit Report Tracking System																																									
1. Audit Title Street Closure Permit Activities	2. This Report Date 6/2/95																																								
3. Department Public Works	4. Last Report Date N/A																																								
5. Department Head George E. Wolf, Jr.	6. Contact Person/Phone Jerry Nelson, P.E. 274-1686																																								
7. Audit Release Date 12/12/94	8. ARTS Number 94-14-1																																								
9. Status of All Audit Recommendations																																									
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<p>Recommendation No. 1: The Director of Public Works should develop procedures designed to increase compliance with the street closure permit requirements.</p> <p>Status: In Progress. We are developing procedures for technicians to review permit locations on a regular basis. For full implementation, we would anticipate that this would require two additional technicians and an engineer to work full time on this program. The funding for this would be provided by the new permitting procedure.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 2: The Director of Public Works should implement a requirement that proof that a street closure permit has been obtained, be a condition of obtaining an excavation permit.</p> <p>Status: Implemented. Discussion with the Engineering Division to develop program to cross-check excavation permits with traffic control permits has been held. That division is checking, prior to issuance of excavation permit; that a traffic control permit, if required, has been obtained.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 3: The Director of Public Works should implement procedures designed to ensure that utilities that issue excavation permits to themselves, comply with street closure permit requirement.</p> <p>Status: In Progress. A procedure has been developed requiring utilities to obtain annual permits for each work vehicle. As a requirement of obtaining a permit, the utility must submit proof of certification by recognized training agencies that employees are trained and qualified in work zone traffic control. Any work performed outside the scope of the annual permit will require the utility to obtain and pay for a permit. Inspection by our staff on a random basis will be made as a part of Recommendation No. 1. This process is being implemented.</p>																																									

Audit Report Tracking System		Page 2 of 2
Audit Title: Street Closure Permit Activities		
Report Date: 6/2/95		
10. Recommendations Included in this Report (continued)		
<p>Recommendation No. 4: The Director of Public Works should require Water and Pollution Control, and other city departments to acquire and pay for street closure permits when closing streets or lanes.</p> <p>Status: Partially Implemented. The Water Services Department and other departments not funded by the General Fund will be included in the annual utility traffic control permit program. We do require them to obtain and pay for permits beyond the scope of their annual permits. The other departments funded through the General Fund are required to obtain a permit, but the fee is waived.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 5: The Director of Public Works should develop a systematic street closure inspection system, paid from revenue resulting from increased compliance.</p> <p>Status: In Progress. A system of inspection is being developed. However, revenues have not been generated to fund implementation of the system, which requires additional personnel and support.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 6: The City Manager should develop for City Council's consideration, a revised street closure permit fee structure that would include economic incentives to reduce the negative impact of closures.</p> <p>Status: Implemented. Ordinance Revisions to Traffic Control permit fee structure have been enacted and increased fees are being collected as of May 5, 1995. The fee structure has been developed to include an application fee of \$15.00 and an engineering inspection fee that is assessed for those permits over 3 days and that increases as the length of closure increases. The other items covered in the ordinance were provisions for an annual permit, water/sewer main connections and disconnection's; festival permits; trailers or dumpsters; parking meter occupancy; and double fines for not having a permit.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 7: The Director of Public Works should develop written policies and procedures addressing the issuance of closure permits.</p> <p>Status: Implemented. This has been done and is incorporated in the revised ordinances. These policies and procedures are broad based, since each permit may be unique in the overall requirements. However, this general policy and procedure has been developed to outline the process.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 8: The Director of Public Works should discontinue the practice of allowing applicants for closure permits to be billed for the service fee. Applicants should be required to pay at the time the permit application is made.</p> <p>Status: Implemented. This has been done. All payment must be made at the time a permit is issued. The implementation was made once concerns were raised during the course of the audit.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 9: The Director of Public Works should revise the closure permit database to include information on the location of closures in a consistent format. The Director should consult the City Address Standards Committee to ensure that the format for location information is compatible with the City's geographic information system.</p> <p>Status: In Progress. Currently, a new database software is being developed to incorporate these recommendations and modernize our system.</p>		

Audit Report Tracking System			
1. Audit Title Street Closure Permit Activities	2. This Report Date September 20, 1996		
3. Department Public Works	4. Last Report Date December 12, 1995		
5. Department Head George E. Wolf, Jr.	6. Contact Person/Phone Jerry Nelson 274-1686		
7. Audit Release Date December 12, 1994	8. ARTS Number 94-14-1		
9. Status of All Recommendations			
<u>Status</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Date</u>
1. Partially Implemented	9/20/96	5. Implemented	5/1/96
2. Implemented	5/1/95	6. Implemented	5/5/95
3. Implemented	1/1/96	7. Implemented	5/1/95
4. Implemented	12/12/95	8. Implemented	11/31/94
		9. In Progress	9/20/96
10. Recommendations Included in this Report			
<p>Recommendation No. 1: The Director of Public Works should develop procedures designed to increase compliance with the street closure permit requirements.</p> <p>Status: Partially Implemented. We have developed procedures for technicians to review permit locations on a regular basis. Beginning May 1, 1996, Street and Traffic received approval to begin the process of hiring staff to work full time on this program. At present, we were successful in hiring one additional technician in July, 1996. We are completing our selection process of hiring an engineer to directly supervise this program. Additional personnel are currently being recruited.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 2: The Director of Public Works should implement a requirement that proof that a street closure permit has been obtained be a condition of obtaining an excavation permit.</p> <p>Status: Implemented. Discussion with the Engineering Division to develop program to cross-check excavation permits with street closure permits has been held. That division is checking, this prior to issuance of excavation permit, that a traffic control permit, if required, has been obtained.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 3: The Director of Public Works should implement procedures designed to ensure that utilities that issue excavation permits to themselves comply with street closure permit requirements.</p> <p>Status: Implemented. A procedure has been developed requiring utilities to obtain annual permits for each work vehicle. As a requirement of obtaining a permit, the utility must submit proof of certification by recognized training agencies that employees are trained and qualified in work zone traffic control. Any work performed outside the scope of the annual permit will require the utility to obtain and pay for a permit. The annual traffic control permit program was implemented in January, 1996. Utilities will be required to show that certification will be achieved for all employees over a 2 year training schedule. Inspection by our staff on a random basis is being made, but will be enhanced with full staffing that we are currently attempting to hire.</p>			

Audit Report Tracking System

Audit Title: Street Closure Permit Activities**Report Date:** September 20, 1996**10. Recommendations Included in this Report (continued)**

Recommendation No. 4: The Director of Public Works should require Water and Pollution Control, and other city departments to acquire and pay for street closure permits when closing streets or lanes.

Status: Implemented. The Water Services Department, and other departments not funded by the General Fund are being included with the annual traffic control permit. We are in the process of implementing the annual permit program, the Water Services Department is one of the first utilities to be issued these permits. These permits as well as other permits for work outside the scope of the annual permit are being paid for. The other departments funded through the General Fund are required to obtain a permit, but the fee is waived.

Recommendation No. 5: The Director of Public Works should develop a systematic street closure inspection system, paid for from the revenues resulting from increased compliance.

Status: Implemented. A system of inspections has been developed. Revenues are being generated to fund implementation of system, which involves additional personnel and support. We have hired one individual for inspection and additional staffing is being recruited.

Recommendation No. 6: The City Manager should develop for the City Council consideration a revised street closure permit fee structure that would include economic incentives to reduce the negative impacts of closures.

Status: Implemented. Ordinance revisions to traffic control permit fee structure have been enacted and fees are being collected as of May 5, 1995. The fee structure has been developed to include an application fee of \$15.00 and an engineering inspection fee that is assessed for those permits over 3 days and that increases as the length of closure increases. The other items covered in the ordinance were provisions for an annual permit, water/sewer main connections and disconnections; festival permits, trailers or dumpsters, parking meter occupancy, and double fines for not having a permit.

Recommendation No. 7: The Director of Public Works should develop written policies and procedures addressing the issuance of closure permits. At a minimum, these policies and procedures should include:

- a) conditions under which permit fees will be waived,
- b) conditions under which a permit will be issued to allow parking when parking is normally restricted,
- c) restrictions that will be placed on closures.

Status: Implemented. This has been done and is incorporated in the revised ordinances. These policies and procedures are broadbased, since each permit may be unique in overall requirements. However, this general policy and procedure has been developed to outline the process.

Recommendation No. 8: The Director of Public Works should discontinue the practice of allowing applicants for closure permits to be billed for the service fee. Applicants should be required to pay at the time the permit application is made.

Status: Implemented. All payment must be made at the time a permit is issued. The implementation was made once concerns were raised during the course of the audit.

Page 3 of 3
Audit Report Tracking System
Audit Title: Street Closure Permit Activities Report Date: September 20, 1996
10. Recommendations Included in this Report (continued)
<p>Recommendation No. 9: The Director of Public Works should revise the closure permit database to include information on the location of closures in a consistent format. The Director should consult the City Address Standards Committee to ensure that the format for location information compatible with the City's geographic information system.</p> <p>Status: In Progress. A new database software has been recently developed to incorporate these recommendations and modernize our system. However, implementation along with debugging of the software has not occurred.</p>

Audit Report Tracking System			
1. Audit Title Street Closure Permit Activities	2. This Report Date March 10, 1997		
3. Department Public Works	4. Last Report Date September 20, 1996		
5. Department Head George E. Wolf, Jr.	6. Contact Person/Phone Jere Meredith 274-1687		
7. Audit Release Date December 12, 1994	8. ARTS Number 94-14-1		
9. Status of All Recommendations			
<u>Status</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Date</u>
1. Implemented	2/13/97	5. Implemented	5/1/96
2. Implemented	5/1/95	6. Not Implemented as	3/10/95
3. Implemented	1/1/96	recommended	
4. Implemented	12/12/95	7. Implemented	5/1/95
		8. Implemented	11/31/94
		9. In Progress	3/10/97
10. Recommendations Included in this Report			
<p>Recommendation No. 1: The Director of Public Works should develop procedures designed to increase compliance with the street closure permit requirements.</p> <p>Status: Implemented. Beginning May 1, 1996, Street and Traffic received approval to begin the process of hiring staff to work full time on this program. We currently have an inspector and engineer hired and have begun our inspections. Through budgetary reductions, the remaining two staff positions were eliminated. Therefore the originally developed procedures will be significantly cut back.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 2: The Director of Public Works should implement a requirement that proof that a street closure permit has been obtained be a condition of obtaining an excavation permit.</p> <p>Status: Implemented. Discussion with the Engineering Division to develop program to cross-check excavation permits with street closure permits has been held. That division has developed procedures that require proof that a traffic control permit, if required, has been obtained prior to issuance of an excavation permit.</p> <p>Recommendation No. 3: The Director of Public Works should implement procedures designed to ensure that utilities that issue excavation permits to themselves comply with street closure permit requirements.</p> <p>Status: Implemented. A procedure has been developed requiring utilities to obtain annual permits for each work vehicle. As a requirement of obtaining a permit, the utility must submit proof of certification by recognized training agencies that employees are trained and qualified in work zone traffic control. Any work performed outside the scope of the annual permit will require the utility to obtain and pay for a permit. The annual traffic control permit program was implemented in January, 1996. Utilities will be required to show that certification will be achieved for all employees over a 2 year training schedule. Inspection by our staff on a random basis is being made.</p>			

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Report Date:	March 10, 1997
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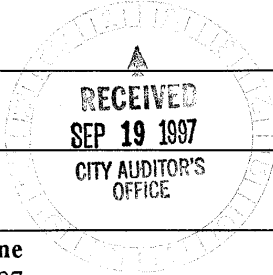
Audit Title: Street Closure Permit Activities

Report Date: March 10, 1997

10. Recommendations Included in this Report (continued)

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Status: In Progress. Our department has been developing computer software in-house, however a recently organized city task force looking at all permits issued by the city has developed an RFP to select an existing computer software that will be used not only by the traffic control permits section, but also Engineering, and Codes Administration. This software is intended to unify the database for all permits and should be implemented when the software has been selected, since this activity appears to be more global and we see the benefit in using this unified software, in-house development has been placed on hold for the time being..

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Audit Report Tracking System

Audit Title: Street Closure Permit Activities
Report Date: September 8, 1997

10. Recommendations Included in this Report (continued)

Recommendation No. 9: The Director of Public Works should revise the closure permit database to include information on the location of closures in a consistent format. The Director should consult the City Address Standards Committee to ensure that the format for location information compatible with the City's geographic information system.

Status: In Progress. Our department has been developing computer software in-house. However a recently organized city task force looking at all permits issued by the city has developed an RFP to select an existing off-the-shelf computer software that will be used not only by the traffic control permits section, but also Engineering, and Codes Administration. This software is intended to unify the database for all permits. The KIVA software system has been selected for this purpose. Contract negotiations should be under way in the near future. Since this activity appears to be more global and we see the benefit in using this unified software, in-house development has been placed on hold for the time being..

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3. Department Public Works	4. Last Report Date March 6, 1998		
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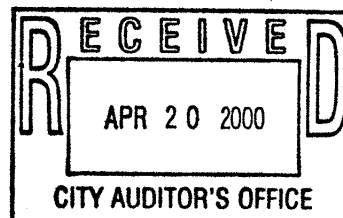
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Appendix C

Director of Public Works' Response



Interdepartmental Communication



DATE: April 20, 2000

TO: Mark Funkhouser, City Auditor

FROM: George E. Wolf, Jr., P.E. Director of Public Works *[Signature]*

SUBJECT: Response to Follow-up Audit Report of the Street Closure Permit Activities

We have reviewed the follow-up report on the Street Closure Permit activities. We are in general agreement with the content of this follow-up.

The following are our responses to the recommendations of the follow-up audit:

RECOMMENDATION 1.

Agree. When the permit group was originally developed, we anticipated documenting our inspections. We had developed reporting forms for this use. Unfortunately, budgetary constraints eliminated positions requested to implement this activity. Over the last couple of years, we were able to re-establish these positions and began the hiring process. Now, for the first time since the original audit, we have a fully staffed permit group. The scope of work for these new employees had been to make up for lost ground. We believe this recommendation can be accomplished and endorse its implementation. The KIVA software, which has been in operation for less than one year, has a new option for inspections that we intend to utilize with our inspectors. When this software along with portable computers for the inspection staff is in place, documenting traffic control work sites can be more easily accomplished.

RECOMMENDATION 2.

Agree. At the time the auditor alerted us to this issue, our staff was not requesting certification proof prior to issuing the annual traffic control permit. We have had verbal communication with the staff on the procedures for issuing the annual traffic control permit and the certifications are being required prior to issuance of the annual traffic control permit.

RECOMMENDATION 3.

Agree. We believe that the Engineering Division, who issues the excavation permits, should establish a mechanism in KIVA by which proof that a street closure/traffic control permit has been obtained is a condition of issuing an excavation permit.

RECOMMENDATION 4.

Agree. We will revisit this issue and present to the City Council for consideration a lane rental proposal.

RECOMMENDATION 5.

Agree. We will work with our accounting section to have city monies deposited on a more timely basis. We are utilizing KIVA to reconcile the fees collected to the fees deposited. We will request training on cash handling from the finance department for our permit staff.

George E. Wolf, Jr., P.E.
Director of Public Works